

Commercial Floriculture emerging as new form of employment across J&K

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Nov 7: Commercial Floriculture in Jammu and Kashmir is helping the farmers to multiply their profits with the help of Government sponsored schemes and other related interventions. Commercial Floriculture, a specialized form of Horticulture aimed at augmenting the income of Growers and generating employment opportunities involves setting up of Ornamental Nurseries, Aromatic oil crop farming like Lavender, Cut flower production of Rose, Carnation, Gerbera, Lilium, among others as well as Bulb production of Iris, Daffodils, Dahlia, Lilium, Gladiolus, Peonia, Cyclamen, Ranunculus, etc.

Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) like MIDH, RKVY, and ATMA are being implemented for the promotion of the commercial Floriculture Sector in J&K. The department is organizing regular sessions of

training within and outside J&K for farmers/growers in order to make them aware of modern trends in Floriculture Sector. Unemployed youths and farmers may register themselves under these schemes and start their own business in loose and cut flower production, aromatic plant cultivation, ornamental nursery and use of integrated farming for their employment and revenue generation. Floriculture products mainly consist of cut flowers, pot plants, cut foliage, seeds bulbs, tubers, rooted cuttings and dried flowers or leaves. The important floricultural crops in the international cut flower trade are Rose, Carnation, Chrysanthemum, Gargera, Gladiolus, Gypsophila, Liatris, Nerine, Orchids, Archilea, Anthurium, Tulip, and Lilies.

Notably, cultivation of lavender as part of commercial Floriculture has changed fortunes of farmers in Jammu and Kashmir under 'Aroma Mission or Purple Revolution', an initia-

tive of the Central Government towards transforming lives of UT's farmer community.

Lavender cultivation is practiced in almost all 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir. Under the mission, first-time farmers were given free lavender saplings while those who had cultivated lavender before were charged Rs. 5-6 per sapling.

Rubbena Tabassum from Yarikalan Chadoora, Budgam has become an inspiration for many youth particularly women due to her dedication and passion which eventually helped her to set up Nursery of Flowers. Department of Floriculture also contributed a lot by providing 50% financial assistance to erect structure and assistance in procuring high value variety flowers which eventually resulted into flourishing of My Nursery of Flowers, she says.

Bharat Bhushan, a resident of village Lehrote, Block Bhalla Doda feels proud of his decision of adopting lavender farming as his income has gradually increased beyond expectations. Seeing my success all my fellow villagers have switched from maize to lavender farming," he said.



Secretary Health reviewing functioning of Nursing Schools and Colleges in J&K.

Secretary Health reviews functioning of Nursing Schools, Colleges in J&K

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Nov 7: Secretary, Health and Medical Education (H&ME), Bhopinder Kumar, today reviewed functioning of Nursing Schools and Colleges established in Jammu and Kashmir under Centrally Sponsored Schemes under phase-I, II, III and under PMDP.

Dr. Yashpal Sharma, Director (Coordination), New Medical Colleges, Nursing Colleges and Paramedical Colleges, J&K, briefed the Secretary about the present status of Nursing Schools and Colleges, utilization of funds and the bottlenecks in operationalisation of these institutions.

He informed that 21 ANM/GNM Schools were sanctioned by the Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, in Phase-I and Phase-II of centrally sponsored scheme, out of which, 17 have been made fully operational and 04 are being made operational

by next year. In Phase-III, Gol sanctioned up gradation of 10 ANM/GNM Schools into Nursing Colleges along with the financial grant to augment the infrastructure, Lab Machinery/Equipments, Books etc. Besides, 05 Nursing Colleges were sanctioned under PMDP at Anantnag, Baramulla, Sopore, Gangyal and Kishtwar.

Secretary directed the Principals of these Medical/Nursing Colleges for timely utilization of funds for creation of infrastructure, procurement of machinery/equipments, books etc to ensure that the requirements of Jammu and Kashmir University are met for starting courses of different streams in these institutions.

Principal Medical College, Jammu and Srinagar were asked to operationalise the Nursing Colleges at Gangyal and Budgam at the earliest. It was also decided that the faculty in these institutions, shall be made available through engagement on academic arrangement basis, against the sanctioned posts and on internal arrangements in consultation with the two Directorates. Besides, the vacant posts of Principals of Nursing Colleges shall be filled shortly.

Among others the meeting was attended by the Principals of Medical Colleges, Director Health Services, Jammu/Kashmir, Director, Finance HME, Joint Director Planning HME, Principals of Nursing Colleges and others senior officers of Health & Medical Education Department.



VRS given RTC workers raising slogans during protest at Jammu on Monday. -Excelsior/Rakesh

VRS given RTC workers stage protest, seek release of arrears

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Nov 7: Voluntarily retired employees of J&K Road Transport Corporation held protest demonstration today demanding release of pending dues.

The retired/VRS accorded employees of the JKRTC under the leadership of Dev Raj Bali assembled outside Press Club here today and started protest demonstration. They were carrying banner in their hand, projecting their burning issues. They expressed serious concern over the delay being caused in the release of their COLA and 6th Pay Commission arrears.

The protestors criticised the adamant attitude of the Finance Department and Transport higher authorities for delaying the payments. They added that these two departments are harassing them without any reason.

He pointed out that at least

51 retired employees have passed away during one decade and the Government did not pay their arrears to them or their families till date.

The protestors demanded release of COLA arrears from 1999 to 31st December 2005, release of arrears of 6th pay commission from January 1, 2006 to March 2012 and release of DA arrears from April 2012 to March 2021.

They appealed the Prime Minister Modi and the Lt Governor, Manoj Sinha to intervene into the matter and provide justice to VRS given RTC workers of J&K, struggling for getting their own hard earned money.

Among others present were Sat Bhushan Singh, Surinder Singh, Deep Raj, B B Sharma, Romesh Bhau, Baldev Raj, Shiv Kumar, Ram Pal, Baldev Raj, Ramesh Bhau, Rajinder Sawhney, etc.



Apni party provincial president and former Minister, Manjit Singh addressing a meeting of party's Youth Wing at Jammu on Monday.

Youth disenchanted with BJP amid growing unemployment: Manjit Singh

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Nov 7: Apni Party provincial president Jammu and former Minister, Manjit Singh today said that disheartened youth have lost hopes with BJP amid growing unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a meeting which was organised by provincial secretary Youth Wing, Vishal Jotshi, the former Minister said that it was unfortunate to note that the youth who want to open some industrial units and get the land allotted to them have to face harsh attitude of the authorities whereas the outsiders are facilitated by the same authorities.

"The disheartening attitude of the officials has become a routine and it has disappointed the younger generation who applied for Government jobs, but did not get it. Even if some got the job, the recruitment surfaced as a major scam making the selected lot of the aspirants unemployed," he said.

He said that "The situation is alarming in view of the growing unemployment and no headway with regard to employment opportunities. The BJP which used to claim to be the sole champion of Jammu has failed on all fronts and it has left people in complete hopelessness and alienated."

He said that "The unemployed youth have become over-

Representatives of various travel and tour bodies' today called on the Secretary, Tourism, Sarmad Hafeez here and discussed the obtaining tourism scenario in the UT.

Director, Tourism, Kashmir, Fazlul Haseeb, other officers of the Tourism Department and representatives of travel and tour operators were present in the meeting. The representatives put forth different issues and suggestions for tourism promotion with respect to their concerned fields in the Kashmir valley.

Speaking on the occasion, the Tourism Secretary impressed upon the stakeholders to work closely with the Department for obtaining maximum results for the sector and the trade. He informed the group that the Department is working round the clock to maintain the lead Jammu & Kashmir has attained in the last two years in the tourism sector in the country and sought their active involvement and feedback.

Sarmad Hafeez maintained that J&K has a huge potential in terms of tourism and recreational activities where the local stakeholders from the tourism sector would offer and advertise offbeat tourist destinations besides the already established ones to people outside so that the Union Territory maintains its number one tourist destination tag in the country.

The Tourism Secretary informed the group that a series of roadshows and promotional events, at national and international levels, have been planned by the Department for the coming days and months so that the tourist footfall to the UT is not only maintained but also increased. He said besides Gulmarg destinations like Sonamarg, Doodhpathri and Yousmarg should be kept open in coming winters and many snow activities are being planned to attract more tourists during winters.

Sarmad Hafeez said both the department and the stakeholders should work together for betterment of the tourism sector as the intent of the Government is to help local stakeholders to take maximum benefit through these tourism activities.

BJP delaying polls in JK fearing backlash by masses for misgovernance: Harsh Dev

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Nov 7: Former Cabinet minister and AAP J&K coordination committee incharge Harsh Dev Singh today said that democratic setup in Jammu and Kashmir is out of order since several years and BJP is even violating the directions of Supreme Court which mentions holding elections at the earliest in a state where assembly gets dissolved prematurely.

"BJP is delaying assembly elections in J&K as it has observed shrunk space and backlash from people who are ready to teach BJP a lesson for its governance and pushing J&K in a state of uncertainty," Singh said while addressing the workers during a party function, here today.

During the function, a large number of youth activists and volunteers from parts of Jammu joined Aam Aadmi Party considering pro-people policies of party as a new reform in political spheres. The event was presided over by Harsh Dev Singh who was accompanied by other senior

leaders of the Party.

The new entrants include Rampaul Sharma, Shiv Dutt, Arjun Kumar, Sahil Sharma, Arjun Singh, Chandar Singh, Harish Pal, Santokh Singh, Mukesh Kumar, Ranjeet Singh, Ajay Kumar, Darshan Kumar, Suraj Singh, Binny Sharma, Vijay Kumar, Anshu Kumar, Neeraj Thakur, Ajay Kumar, Jugal Kumar, Sukh Dev, Naresh Kumar, Meena Kumari, Pinka, Rommi Sharma, Rishav Raina, Joginder Singh, Gulab Singh, Sham Singh, Sham Thakur, Sunil Singh, Ganesh Kumar and Kuldeep Kumar.

Addressing the event, Harsh Dev said that AAP will emerge as a single largest party in J&K after next assembly elections and the next Government in J&K will be of AAP and it will be a Government of every 'Aam Aadmi'.

He further said that joining in the Party is going on at large scale and people are becoming a part of political revolution under AAP with joining at provincial, district as well as block level.



Representatives of travel & tour bodies meeting with Secy Tourism Sarmad Hafeez on Monday.

Representatives of travel trade call on Tourism Secy Sarmad Hafeez asks tourism stakeholders to work closely with Dept for max results

Excelsior Correspondent

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Director, Tourism, Kashmir, Fazlul Haseeb, other officers of the Tourism Department and representatives of travel and tour operators were present in the meeting. The representatives put forth different issues and suggestions for tourism promotion with respect to their concerned fields in the Kashmir valley.

Speaking on the occasion, the Tourism Secretary impressed upon the stakeholders to work closely with the Department for obtaining maximum results for the sector and the trade. He informed the group that the Department is working round the clock to maintain the lead Jammu & Kashmir has attained in the last two years in the tourism sector in the country and sought their active involvement and feedback.

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Dulhasti Power Station celebrates NHPC Raising Day

Excelsior Correspondent

KISHTWAR, Nov 7: Dulhasti Power Station here today celebrated the 48th NHPC Raising Day with great fervor.

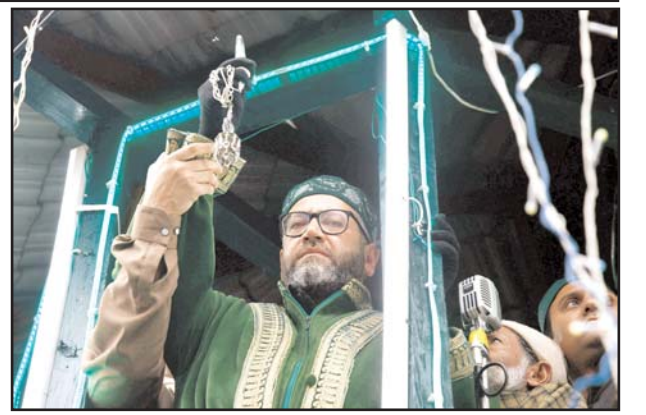
Inaugurating the function, M.K Kashyap, Group General Manager (Incharge), Dulhasti Power Station hoisted the NHPC Flag which was followed by NHPC song.

Speaking on the occasion, Kashyap greeted and called upon everyone to work hard and diligently to take NHPC to new heights of progress.

A melodious programme was also presented by the students of KV School & KIDZEE School Kishtwar and also by the employees of Dulhasti Power Station. Kashyap felicitated the local media persons especially invited in the programme with mementoes and also distributed prizes to the participants of cultural programmes.

Ashok Kumar Dhanwal, Senior Manager (HR) conducted the programme and also presented vote of thanks.

On this occasion Dr. Nisha Sharma, General Manager (Medical Services); Surendra Kumar Mishra, General Manager (Electrical); Dr. R.P Singh, Group Deputy General Manager (HR); Sanjay Kumar Singh, Deputy General Manager (Finance); Divakar Awadhya, Group SM (IT); Sachin Vishwakarma, Sr. Manager (IT); other officers and employees and their family members, Commandant CISF, Rahul Kumar and Principal KV Kishtwar, Manoj Kumar were also present.



Holy relic being displayed at Peer Dastageer Sahib shrine on Monday.

Thousands visit Dastageer Sahib shrine for Urs

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Nov 07: Amid inclement weather conditions, thousands of devotees today visited Sheikh Syed Abdul Qadir Jeelani (RA) shrine, popularly known as Peer Dastageer Sahib here at Khanyar area of Srinagar when the holy relic of the Sufi saint was displayed after 5 prayers.

On the annual Urs of the 11th century Sufi saint, Dastageer Sahab (RA), thousands of devotees including men, women, old and children thronged the shrine today and participated in the special prayers.

The annual Urs of Dastageer Sahab (RA), which was today observed with religious zeal and enthusiasm, is being annually observed on the 11th day of Rabi Al Thani--the fourth month of the Islamic Hijri Calendar.

The two shrines on the name of Peer Dastageer Sahab situated in Srinagar areas including Khanyar and Sarai Bala witnessed huge religious gathering throughout the day, during which emotional scenes were seen while the holy relic of the revered saint was displayed in the shrines.

The biggest congregational

prayers were held at Dastageer Sahib shrine in Khanyar area of Old City.

Amid rainfall, the night-long prayers were also held in both the shrines in which thousands of devotees participated during which the religious clerics threw light on the teachings of the revered saint. The devotees also participated in the special prayers, which were held today.

The shrines were decorated by the Waqf Board, officials said, adding that adequate arrangements were made by the Waqf board authorities. Despite inclement weather conditions, the devotees were facilitated throughout the day. The holy relic was displayed after every prayer today and will be displayed tomorrow five times also.

Outside the shrines, the local and non-local business establishments had installed the carts and were seen selling the Kashmir traditional food stuff.

Meanwhile, special arrangements were also made for the smooth passage to the commuters today at Sarai Bala and Khanyar areas of Srinagar where the shrines of Dastageer Sahab (RA) are located.

TAAJ to file criminal complaint against misuse of name

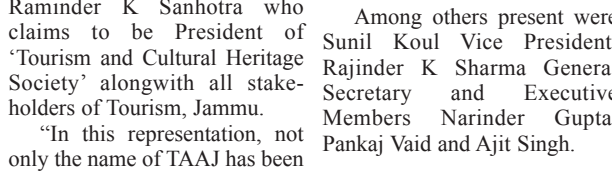
Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Nov 7: "Some unscrupulous elements are misusing the name of Travel Agents Association of Jammu (TAAJ) and are maligning the name of not only the J&K Tourism Department but also the LG of J&K UT and other officers of the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board by using the name of our Association in their interacting with media persons at Jammu on representation sent Monday."

He informed that the TAAJ has decided to file a criminal complaint with the J&K Police against this Raminder Sanhotra regarding this misuse and misrepresentation of their Association name in his representation to PM and defaming the name of TAAJ.

Among others present were Sunil Koul Vice President, Rajinder K Sharma General Secretary and Executive Members Narinder Gupta, Pankaj Vaid and Ajit Singh.

"In this representation, not only the name of TAAJ has been used without seeking any permission from the President TAAJ but the signatures are also forged, showing the devious mindset of this Raminder K Sanhotra", he added.



Capt (Retd) Anil Gour President TAAJ interacting with media persons at Jammu on Monday. -Excelsior/Rakesh



Saini community youth during a protest near Press Club, Jammu on Monday. -Excelsior/Rakesh

Saini community youth stage protest, demand revocation of OBC status

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Nov 7: Youth of Saini community today staged a protest demonstration in Jammu, demanding revocation of OBC status to the community.

A large number of youth of Saini Community along with their elders assembled this afternoon at Exhibition Ground, Jammu to register their protest against granting of OBC status to the Community.

The protesting youth of the Community said that the Government recently granted OBC status to them but they are not interested in getting OBC status. "We never asked the Government for OBC status, as our community members are able to compete with others on the basis of their talent," the protesting Saini youth maintained.

"Saini community youth are in no way less talented than other youth of the country. The community youth are highly competitive and have already made our community proud by performing excellently in tough competitions in every sector, be it Government job, civil services, sports, education, medical, engineering, etc," they said, adding Government should give OBC status to some other community which is weak and backward.

The protesting youth said such type of reservation may lower down their morale which they cannot accept at any cost. Emphasizing that reservation should only be accorded to economically weaker sections of the society, Saini community youth said that they categorically oppose the inclusion of the Community in the OBC/OSC list and demand the immediate withdrawal of their Community from the OBC list.



DDC Jammu Chairman Bharat Bhushan inaugurating a Multimedia Exhibition organized by CBC J&K at Jhiri.

CBC organizes 5-day exhibition on AKAM

Excelsior Correspondent

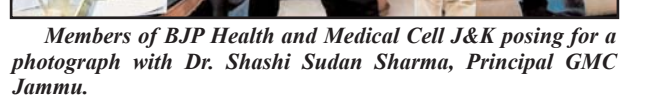
JAMMU, Nov 7: Central Bureau of Communication (CBC) Jammu, Union Ministry of Information & Broadcasting today organized a 5-day long Multimedia Exhibition at Jhiri, on 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahatsav (AKAM)' alongside the 10-day-long annual 'Jhiri Mela' that commenced today after a two-year gap due to the Covid pandemic.

The Exhibition was inaugurated by Bharat Bhushan, Chairman of District Development Council (DDC), Jammu in presence of Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Mukesh Singh, ADGP Jammu, Avny Lavasa, DC Jammu, Chandan Kohli, SSP Jammu, Ghulam Abbas, Joint Director CBC Jammu and Rajeev Khajuria, SDM Marh.

The exhibition showcases the freedom struggle of India through a series of 'Photo Exhibits' as well as audio visual medium. Apart from this, special section in the exhibition has been dedicated to 8 years of 'Seva Sushasan- Garib Kalyan', wherein the achievements of the Government across various sectors in the last 8 years including in Jammu and Kashmir have been highlighted.

Separate corner for Azadi Quest- recently launched online educational video games and Swaraj- 75 episodic mega serial portraying stories of unsung heroes of India's freedom struggle is also part of the exhibition display.

The aim of the Multimedia Exhibition is to generate awareness among the masses regarding various initiatives & welfare programmes of Government of India, said Ghulam Abbas, Joint Director, CBC J&K, Ladakh Region. "It is an effort to familiarize people with the objective and vision behind 'Amrit Mahatsav', and how people can be a part of the campaign," Abbas added.



Members of BJP Health and Medical Cell J&K posing for a photograph with Dr. Shashi Sudan Sharma, Principal GMC Jammu.

Puneet Mahajan calls on Dr Shashi Sudan

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Nov 7: BJP convener of Health and Medical Cell J&K, Puneet Mahajan here today called on Dr. Shashi Sudan Sharma, Principal and Dean of Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu.

Mahajan discussed the outbreak of dengue epidemic with GMC Principal and stressed on making people vigilant about the problem by creating awareness.

The patient must be admitted in hospital and his movement should be restricted.

On this occasion the GMC Principal was felicitated for her role in combating the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mahajan assured the GMC Principal that volunteers of Health and Medical Cell shall always be available to serve the cause of the people for which they are on their toes since the beginning of Corona crisis.

The GMC Principal thanked the Convener for lauding the services and sacrifices of doctors and health care workers in fighting COVID-19 pandemic.

Anil Bhari and Amit Gupta were also present on the occasion.

He said that it is an emergency and we have to stop spreading dengue by all efforts.

The BJP leader said in case of fever one should immediately go for dengue test and in case of positive result maximum fluid should be given to the patient and in of drastic fall of platelets,